



HOUSE BILL 1743: Improve River Basin Modeling

2009-2010 General Assembly

Committee:	Date:	July 26, 2010
Introduced by:	Prepared by:	Jeff Hudson
Analysis of:	S.L. 2010-143	Staff Attorney

SUMMARY: *S.L. 2010-143 directs the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to develop hydrologic models for each of the State's 17 major river basins.¹*

BILL ANALYSIS:

S.L. 2010-143 directs the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to develop basinwide hydrologic models for each of the State's 17 major river basins. DENR will establish a schedule for developing the models and give priority to those basins most likely to suffer water supply shortages or threats to ecological integrity or for which an existing hydrologic model has not been developed.

Each model will be designed to simulate water flows in response to different variables, conditions, and scenarios. Each model will specifically be designed to predict the places, times, frequencies, and intervals at which any of the following might occur:

- Yield may be inadequate to meet all needs.
- Yield may be inadequate to meet all essential water uses.
- Ecological flow may be adversely affected.

With the assistance of a Science Advisory Board, DENR will characterize the ecology of the river basins and identify the flows necessary to maintain ecological integrity. DENR will submit completed models to the Environmental Management Commission (EMC), to be adopted by the EMC following a public comment period. DENR will not develop a model for a river basin for which a model has already been developed if DENR determines that the model meets the requirements set out in the session law. DENR could adopt a hydrologic model developed by another entity and could make any modifications or additions to the model that are necessary to meet the requirements set out in the session law.

S.L. 2010-143 also provides that the language governing the development of models would not vary any existing or impose any additional regulatory requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: S.L. 2010-143 became effective July 22, 2010.

H1743-SMSB-129(sl) v5

¹ H1743, as introduced by Representatives Crawford, Gillespie, Owens, and Tarleton, was DENR/LGC Evaluate Water System Operations, a recommendation of the Legislative Study Commission on Water and Wastewater Infrastructure.